DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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R (261)

POSSIBILITY OF SAUDI ASSISTANCE OR PARTICIPATION IN FUTURE WARS

-- Each Letter of Offer contract (DD Form 1513) contains several conditions of sale including the condition that the articles and services to be provided cannot be retransferred to a Third Country without the prior approval of the USG. In all of our convversations with the Saudis -- and we have talked to the highest levels -- they have indicated that they will abide by the provisions under which the United States supplies military equipment. The Saudi record in this regard during the past has been excellent.

-- The Saudi leaders have repeatedly assured us they have no aggressive intentions against any state in the region. In discussions with Executive Branch officials and Members of Congress, the Saudis have stressed the defensive nature of Saudi Arabia's armed forces modernization program and given assurances they will not train the pilots of other Arab countries on the F-15 or transfer the aircraft to Third Countries without U.S. approval.

-- There are substantial reasons for Saudi Arabia to avoid participation in a conflict with Israel even with the additional equipment for the F-15s in their possession. The Saudis are very much aware that the Israelis have a highly effective air defense system, including Israeli interceptor aircraft (F-15s, F-16s, KFIRS and F-4s) which could engage the attackers well outside of Israel's borders, a surface-to-air missile ring (I-Hawk/Basic Hawk), and various air defense artillery and missile point defense systems. This Israeli air defense system

is highly effective and the crews are well trained.

-- The Saudis also know that the Israeli air force could strike back into central Saudi Arabia. Additionally, commitment of forces against Israel and their almost inevitable loss would expose Saudi Arabia to attack from adversaries to the East and South.